

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
IO-13 ACDA-12 TRSE-00 HA-05 /096 W
-----028977 220852Z /10/50

R 211558Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7811
INFO AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMCONSUL BREMEN
AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMCONSUL STUTTGART
USMISSION USBERLIN
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BERLIN 4761

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y BONN ADDED AS INFO ADDEE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (CARTER, JIMMY) GE, US, WB
SUBJECT: EAST GERMAN REACTIONS TO THE PRESIDENT'S
BERLIN VISIT.

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REF: A) STATE 181881, B) BERLIN 04640, C) BERLIN 04624,
D) BERLIN 4662, E) BERLIN 04694

1. TO DATE THERE HAVE BEEN NO OFFICIAL EAST GERMAN
COMMENTS ON THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO THE FRG AND BERLIN.
MEDIA TREATMENT HAS RANGED FROM MEAGER TO NON-EXISTENT.
THE REACTION OF THE MAN IN THE STREET, TO THE EXTENT WE

CAN GAUGE IT, HAS BEEN POSITIVE. THERE HAS BEEN NO EDITORIAL COMMENT IN NEUES DEUTSCHLAND OR ANY OF THE OTHER BERLIN PAPERS, INCLUDING THE FOREIGN POLICY WEEKLY HORIZONT. THE ONLY TREATMENT OF WHICH WE ARE AWARE IS IN THE LEIPZIGER VOLKSZEITUNG (THE SED DAILY FOR LEIPZIG BEZIRK) OF JULY 15/16 WHICH COMMENTS IN A SOMEWHAT SARCASTIC TONE ON THE PRESIDENT'S FRG VISIT. THE COMMENTARY, SIGNED BY ONE DR. HORST PATTKE (WHO IS NOT KNOWN TO US) STATES THAT THE PRESIDENT'S SERIOUSNESS OF PURPOSE IS TO BE DOUBTED AND THAT HE IS CONFUSING HIS ROLE AS GOVERNMENT LEADER WITH THAT OF A BAPTIST MINISTER BECAUSE OF HIS CONCERNS ABOUT ALLEGED DANGERS TO HUMAN RIGHTS SOMEWHERE ELSE RATHER THAN IN THE US. THE ARTICLE IS INTERESTING ONLY BECAUSE IT IS RARE FOR THE PRESIDENT TO BE DIRECTLY CRITICIZED IN EAST GERMAN PAPERS. WE ATTACH, HOWEVER, NO PARTICULAR SIGNIFICANCE AT THIS TIME TO THE LEIPZIG STORY BOTH BECAUSE THE CRITICISM IS FAIRLY MILD IN TONE AND BECAUSE IT HAS APPEARED IN A REGIONAL PAPER.

2. IT APPEARS THAT LARGE NUMBERS OF EAST BERLINERS HEARD THE BROADCASTS OF THE PRESIDENT'S BERLIN REMARKS, AND IN PARTICULAR THE TOWN MEETING. ALTHOUGH OUR SAMPLING SO FAR IS SMALL, WE HAVE NOT YET MET ANY EAST BERLINERS WHO DID NOT WATCH OR HEAR THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT. OUR CONTACTS HAVE GENERALLY EXPRESSED PRAISE FOR THE PRESIDENT AND THE TRIP.

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3. WHILE WE HAVE NOT HEARD ANY COMMENTS ON THE PRESIDENT'S SPEECH AT THE AIR LIFT MEMORIAL, ALL OF OUR CONTACTS HAVE SPOKEN MOST OPENLY AND FAVORABLY CONCERNING THE BERLIN TOWN MEETING. SEVERAL OF THEM HAVE GONE OUT OF THEIR WAY TO LET US KNOW THAT THEY FELT THAT THIS ASPECT OF THE PRESIDENT'S TRIP MADE A VERY GOOD IMPRESSION ON EAST GERMAN VIEWERS. PARTICULARLY CITED WERE THE DIRECT GIVE AND TAKE OF THE MEETING, THE PRESIDENT'S WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT SPONTANEOUS QUESTIONS, AND HIS EVIDENT CAREFUL PREPARATION FOR THIS MEETING WITH A GERMAN AUDIENCE.

4. PARTICULAR INTEREST AMONG OUR CONTACTS HAS FOCUSED ON THE QUESTION FROM THE RETIRED EAST GERMAN WOMAN FROM BAUTZEN CONCERNING A POSSIBLE PRESIDENTIAL VISIT TO THE GDR. OUR CONTACTS FELT THAT THE PRESIDENT HANDLED THE QUESTION WELL AND THAT HE MADE A FAVORABLE IMPRESSION BY HIS INITIAL EXPRESSION OF FRIENDSHIP TO THE EAST GERMAN PEOPLE. SEVERAL OF OUR CONTACTS HAVE, HOWEVER, VOICED CONCERN THAT THE QUESTIONER MAY ENCOUNTER OFFICIAL HARASSMENT WHEN SHE RETURNS TO THE GDR.

5. ADDITIONAL ATTENTION HAS FOCUSED ON THE PRESIDENT'S

REMARKS ON IMPRISONED EAST BERLIN DISSIDENT NICO HUEBNER.
WE HAVE HEARD SOME CONCERN ABOUT THE PRESIDENT'S ASSERTION
THAT PRESSURE FROM THE WESTERN ALLIES CAUSED THE GDR TO
DROP THE CHARGE OF REFUSING INDUCTION AGAINST HUEBNER
(WHICH IS NOT, IN FACT, THE CASE). THERE IS SOME WORRY
THAT THE STATEMENT MAY CAUSE CONFUSION AND INDUCE SIMI-
LARLY MINDED YOUNG EAST GERMANS TO FOLLOW IN HUEBNER'S
FOOTSTEPS BY CLAIMING EXEMPTION FROM INDUCTION ON THE
GROUNDS IT IS PROHIBITED BY BERLIN'S DEMILITARIZED STATUS.

6. WHILE THE PRESIDENT WAS IN WEST BERLIN, THERE APPEARS
TO HAVE BEEN AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF POLICE, UNIFORMED
AND NON-UNIFORMED, IN EAST BERLIN NEAR THE WALL IN THE
AREAS OF THE BRANDENBURG GATE AND POTSDAMMER PLATZ. ONE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BERLIN 4761

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y BONN ADDED AS INFO ADDEE

MEMBER OF THE EMBASSY STAFF WAS ASKED FOR IDENTIFICATION
BY A PLAINCLOTHESMAN NEAR POTSDAMMER PLATZ. IN GENERAL,
CROWD SIZE IN DOWNTOWN EAST BERLIN, INCLUDING NEAR THE
BRANDENBURG GATE, APPEARED NORMAL FOR A SATURDAY AFTERNOON.

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7. ALTHOUGH IT IS STILL TOO EARLY TO ASSESS EITHER
THE PUBLIC OR PRIVATE REACTION AND IMPACT, WE WOULD JUDGE
THAT THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS AND VISIT CREATED A POSITIVE
IMPRESSION AMONG THE GENERAL POPULATION IN EAST BERLIN.
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